Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 REYKJA 01445 301111Z

21 14
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 SS-20 SSO-00 RSC-01 /048 W
---------- 124190
O 301010Z NOV 73
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4150

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1445

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)
SUBJECT: EUROPEAN CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING: UPDATING OF
PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF U.S. - ICELANDIC RELATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 231853; (B) REYKJAVIK 1192

1. THE FOLLOWING IS A COMPLETE REPLACEMENT FOR THE
ASSESSMENT TRANSMITTED BY REFTEL (B).

2. ICLANDIC-U.S. RELATIONS HAVE NEVER BEEN BAD. THEY
HAVE BEEN BETTER THAN THEY ARE TODAY, BUT STILL CAN BE
DESCRIBED AS VERY GOOD. ICELANDERS ARE BASICALLY ISOLATIONIST
AND SELF: CENTERED. THEY VIEW INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE
CONTEXT OF DOMESTIC ISSUES. STATESMANSHIP AMONG THEIR LEADERS
DEFINITELY TAKES SECOND PLACE TO DOMESTIC POLITICAL CON-
SIDERATIONS. THEY DO NOT GENERALLY CARE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL
ISSUES WHICH DO NOT DIRECTLY CONCERN THEMSELVES. IN CASES OF THIS
KIND THEY USUALLY CONFORM TO THE PRINCIPLE OF NORDIC
SOLIDARITY, BUT WHEN THIS IS CONTRARY TO U.S. INTERESTS
THEY CAN BE PERSUADED TO MODERATE THEIR POSITION IF ONE
OTHER NORDIC COUNTRY WILL JOIN THEM IN BREAKING RANKS.

3. FROM THE U.S. POINT OF VIEW ICELAND IS A ONE-ISSUE POST:
RETENTION OF THE U.S. -MANNED NATO NAVAL BASE WHICH IS
CURRENTLY BEING CHALLENGED BY THE LEFT-ORIENTED GOVT THAT
CAME TO POWER IN 1971 AND BY AN INCREASING NUMBER OF ICELANDERS,
MOSTLY OF THE POST WORLD WAR II GENERATION, WHO BELIEVE DE-
TENTE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED AND HENCE THE BASE IS REDUNDANT.
NEGOTIATIONS ARE CURRENTLY UNDER WAY TO FIND A MODUS VIVENDI
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 REYKJA 01445 301111Z

FOR RETENTION IN THE FACE OF THE GOVT'S ANNOUNCED POLICY OF

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

"HAVING THE DEFENSE FORCE LEAVE ICELAND STEP BY STEP, THE AIM BEING TO HAVE THE DEPARTURE OF THE DEFENSE FORCE TAKE PLACE DURING THE ELECTION TERM" (WHICH ENDS JUNE 1975). TEYCHNICALLY UNDER THE REVIEW TERMS OF THE U.S. -ICELAND DEFENSE AGREEMENT OF 1951, WHICH ICELAND INVOKED JUNE 25, 1973, IF A SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT IS NOT REACHED BY DECEMBER 25, 1973, ICELAND CAN UNILATERALLY RENOUNCE THE AGREEMENT ANY TIME THEREAFTER AND THE BASE MUST BE WITHDRAWN WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF RENUNCIATION. BECAUSE THE GOVT IS COMPOSED OF THREE PARTIES (ONE OF WHICH IS COMMUNIST) WHO HAVE DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF THE ANNOUNCED POLICY, THE ICELANDIC NEGOTIATORS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ENTER INTO REALISTIC NEGOTIATIONS AND THE U.S. IS LEFT WITH THE PROBLEM OF FINDING A SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE AT LEAST TO TWO OF THE THREE GOVT PARTIES WITHOUT LOSING SUPPORT OF THE NON-GOVT PRO-BASE PARTIES WHICH HAVE VIEWS OF THEIR OWN. IF WE CAN KEEP THE BASE ISSUE FROM AGAIN BECOMING EMOTIONALLY LINKED WITH SOME EXTRANEOUS ISSUE (AS HAPPENED IN THE CASE OF THE FISHERIES DISPUTE WITH THE BRITISH WHICH CREATED MUCH ANTI-NATO AND ANTI-BASE SENTIMENT UNTIL AN INTERIM SETTLEMENT WAS REACHED NOV 13, 1973), WE BELIEVE WE CAN SUCCEED IN RETAINING THE BASE WITOUT IMPAIRMENT OF ITS BASIC MISSION.

4. GIVEN THE HEAD IN THE SAND ATTITUDE OF THE CURRENT GOVT LEADERS IT WAS PERHAPS TO BE EXPECTED THAT THEY WOULD TRY TO CONVINCE THEMSELVES THAT RECENT MIDDLE EAST EVENTS WERE FAR REMOVED FROM AND HAD NO BEARING ON THE SECURITY OF ICELAND. WHILE U.S. -USSR CONFRONTATION WAS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE MEDIA AND RESULTING U.S.- WESTERN EUROPEAN DISAGREEMENT FEATURED, THE WHOLE MATTER WAS TREATED AS BEING REMOTE TO ICELANDIC INTERESTS.

5. WITH REGARD TO THE ENERGY SHORTAGE, ICELAND IS FORTUNATE IN THAT IT HAS AN ABUNDANCE OF HYDRO-ELECRIC AND GEOTHERMAL POWER. FOR PETROLEUM, HOWEVER, TO FUEL ITS FISHING VESSELS, VEHICLES, FREEZING PLANTS, AND HOMES OUTSIDE OF THE CAPITAL, IT IS COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON SOVIET OIL. THERE IS QUIET SATISFACTION THAT ICELAND IS NOT INVOLVED IN SHORTAGES NOW FACING THE U.S. AND WESTERN EUROPE. ON THE OTHER HAND, A RECENT 70 PERCENT RISE IN SOVIET PRICES HAS CAUSED AN CONFIDENTIAL

UNCOMFORRABLE FEELING THAT ICELAND CAN BE SUBJECTED TO POLITICAL PRESSURE THROUGH OIL. IT IS OUR OBJECTIVE TO MAKE SURE THAT ICELAND'S RELIANCE ON THE SOVIETS FOR OIL DOES NOT HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DEFENSE FORCE NEGOTIATIONS AND TO CONVINCE ICELAND TO RECOGNIZE THAT SOLIDARITY WITH THE U.S. IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN OTHER CONFRONTATIONS IS VERY MUCH TO HER LONG-TERM INTEREST.

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

6. TO SUM UP, WE HAVE PROBLEMS WITH ICELAND, THEY CAN BE OVERCOME, AND TIES WITH THE U.S. WILL REMAIN STRONG.
IRVING

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: martinjw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973REYKJA01445
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: REYKJAVIK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973112/aaaaabee.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) STATE 231853; (B) REYKJAVIK 1192
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Sep-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2002 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EUROPEAN CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING: UPDATING OF PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF U.S. - ICELANDIC RELATIONS
TAGS: OVIP, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005